



*City of Carlsbad*

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1200 Carlsbad Village Drive  
Carlsbad, CA 92008

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For Information, Contact: Denise Vedder  
City Communications Manager, (760) 434-2957

## **“CityStuff” RECEIVES 2006 HELEN PUTNAM AWARD**

### **City of Carlsbad/Junior Achievement Third-Grade Curriculum to be Recognized at City Council Meeting on October 3 at 6 pm**

Carlsbad, CA ... The Carlsbad “CityStuff” Third-Grade Curriculum created to introduce third-graders to their Carlsbad world has received a League of California Cities Helen Putnam Award for Excellence in the category, “Ruth Vreeland Award for Engaging Youth in City Government.” CityStuff was highlighted at the September 2006 League of California Cities Annual Conference in San Diego. The program, and its participants, will be recognized at a City Council Meeting on October 3 at 6 pm.

In this year’s Putnam competition, 150 applications from cities throughout California were entered in 10 categories. Of these, 28 winning entries from 22 cities were selected. The City of Carlsbad was one of only four cities statewide to win two 2006 Putnam awards. The Carlsbad Recreation Department’s Teaching Respect, Unity, and Sportsmanship through Teamwork (T.R.U.S.T.) program received a grand prize in the category, “Enhancing Public Trust, Ethics, and Community Involvement.”

Carlsbad was one of three Ruth Vreeland Award winners. The award recognizes, among other stated selection criteria, “collaborative efforts between cities and other agencies to inform and engage youth about city issues and their communities.”

According to Carlsbad Communications Manager Denise Vedder, CityStuff accomplishes that precise goal. She explains, “Established in 2002, CityStuff is a groundbreaking partnership in which the City of Carlsbad, Junior Achievement, the local business community and the three (Carlsbad Unified, Encinitas Union and San Marcos Unified) public school districts with elementary schools in Carlsbad have joined together, under City auspices, to introduce local government to third graders.”

Vedder believes, “Before CityStuff, elementary school students learned very little about local government, which ironically is the point of access where people can have the most impact. CityStuff celebrates the workings of democracy at its purest level.”

Based on engaging, hands-on activities taught by about 60 trained volunteers teaching solo or in two-person teams, CityStuff annually shows 1,200+ third-grade students in 50+ classrooms in up to 14 schools how Carlsbad government functions. It demonstrates how students and their families can participate in the process. The learning experience is enhanced by fun CityStuff books, the “Carlsbad Rap” and guests appearances by City Council members, City officials and local business leaders.

According to Vedder, the one-hour-per-week, six-week CityStuff curriculum ends with a memorable lesson in democracy. “Each classroom comes to City Council Chambers and conducts a mock council meeting,” she reports. Parents are invited to participate in the process. Many parents indicate that this marks their first visit to Council Chambers and first experience with a Council meeting. Numerous parents, citing their appreciation of getting informed and of taking the private City Hall tour they enjoy as part of the activity, vow to get involved by attending and/or watching Council meetings and taking an active interest in issues in the future.

The October 3 City Council recognition of CityStuff will honor the volunteers and sponsors who have made the program successful. Vedder states, “CityStuff volunteers represent a microcosm of what makes Carlsbad a well-run City and a great place to live. Several have been CityStuff volunteers since the inception of the program.”

Many City employees volunteer, including a City Attorney and the Human Services Director. Other volunteers include an airline pilot, school board trustees, a PTO president, parents, a former principal, businesspeople and the general public.

Donations from corporate sponsors offset the City's and Junior Achievement's materials and operating costs. Current sponsors are Allied Waste, Gemological Institute of America, Lexus Carlsbad, McMillin Companies, Nasco Modesto, Shea Homes, Toyota Carlsbad and Waste Management.

The Helen Putnam Award program was established in 1982 by the League of California Cities to recognize outstanding cities that deliver the highest quality and level of service in the most effective manner possible. This year's awards were based on the League's 2006 stated strategic focus, "to support policies that directly promote the development and redevelopment of healthy and safe cities." For more information about the League and the annual Putnam Awards, visit [www.cacities.org](http://www.cacities.org).

For more information about CityStuff, visit [www.carlsbadca.gov/chall/citystuff](http://www.carlsbadca.gov/chall/citystuff). To become a volunteer for the CityStuff curriculum beginning in early 2007, please contact CityStuff Coordinator Marilyn Campbell at (760) 439-3716 or [wrote4fn@cox.net](mailto:wrote4fn@cox.net).